

AGE OF PROGRESS

The development of Spiritual Truth is the achievement of human freedom.

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WHOLE No. 85.

Religion.

A few days since, we happened to be a listener—a silent listener—to a conversation between two gentlemen, who seemed to be well agreed that Spiritualism should not be designated a religion. We listened for the purpose of learning some good reason why they thought so, but we failed to gather any thing to convince our mind of the correctness of their position. There were some conclusions arrived at by them, in which we fully participated. One of them was the repudiation of definite creeds, or fixed articles of faith.—But we could not understand why it was deemed necessary to connect the idea of a creed with that of religion. They agreed to disapprove sectarianism in all its phases; and so do we, as we understand it. But, again, we could not see any good reason why sectarian exclusiveness should be considered as necessarily pertaining to religion.

There is another question, which, it seems to us, should first be settled, before any attempt is made to decide whether Spiritualism is a religion or not. This is: What is religion? And, inasmuch as we take the affirmative of the question, holding that Spiritualism is a religion, we concede it to be the reader's right to demand of us our definition of the term. Let us proceed, then, to tell what we understand to be the proper signification of the term, Religion.

In the most comprehensive sense, we understand it to mean, the idea which a mind entertains of the existence, the attributes and the government of God, and the relations existing between him and his human children.

This grand idea has its components, which may be distinctly considered. We understand mere human ethics, or the just claims which one man has upon another, and the duties which one member of the human family owes to another, to be a constituent of the soul's religious, moral duties are religious duties, because there is no other way in which men can serve God, but to serve each other. God being infinite in power, wisdom and goodness, and wanting nothing in the perfection of his happiness which man could contribute, we can serve him only in good offices done to his human children, of which each of us is one. Hence all the good which we can do to ourselves and to each other, is duty to God, which is religious duty. In none of this duty is there to be found any thing pertaining to a peculiar creed; for love, charity and good offices to each other, are required of all equally.

The conception of mind, as regards the origin, construction and government of the physical universe, is a constituent of religion. In all the wondrous operations, productions, convolutions, evolutions and revolutions of nature, we behold the harmonious workings of a law, which nought less than an infinite God could have organized and carried into effect. Hence, by merely observing the mechanism and workings of our material surroundings, we are led to embrace the great ultimate truth of all rational theism. And in thus looking through nature, up to nature's God, we can discover

no necessity for creeds or sectarian distinctions. Nor can we see any good reason why the faith which we thus arrive at, in the existence of a great general cause and governing principle, should not be termed Religion.

The Spiritual philosophy, or that system of metaphysics which embraces the doctrine of spiritual entity and immortality, and which teaches that the intelligent principle in man is destined to survive the physical body and live forever, is the most essential element of religion. Yet, in the embracement of this philosophy, we see no occasion for the adoption of a creed, or for sectarian exclusiveness; for, as the Saducees exist only in ancient history, there is no organized religious sect in Christendom, that does not embrace the faith of immortality.

If Spiritualism be not a religion, we should like to be introduced to some system of faith or philosophy which is a religion.—Spiritualism teaches who, what and where God is, more rationally than any other known system of metaphysics. And is not this religion? Spiritualism teaches the nature, attributes, capabilities, and destiny of the human soul, and proves its teachings true by the testimony of millions of souls, that have once inhabited physical bodies on this earth. Are not these religious teachings? and is not the Spiritualism which thus teaches and which thus proves its teachings to be true, a religion? If not, there is no meaning in the word, and it should be thrown out of the language.

Spiritualism teaches the whole duty of man to his brother man and to his God. Is this not religion? What name should be substituted? Is it science? There is some thing like science in the communication of knowledge, we admit; but this applies as well to gambling, pocket-picking and burglary, as it does to the relations subsisting between man and his God. If we call it philosophy, the idea which we shall convey will be about as definite as it would be to say we are looking for a creature, when we are in pursuit of an elephant.

We think we have the secret of this nervousness of Spiritualists, when they hear spiritualism called a religion; for it is of Spiritualists that we have been speaking. And all the religionists outside of Spiritualism, are expected to deny, with emphasis, that Spiritualism is a religion. The secret which we have discovered, is this:

All the sects of Christian orthodoxy have represented the great Architect of the universe and Father of all spirits, as an omnipotent despot, tyrant, fiend! They have, for centuries and centuries, constantly represented him as having created man with a predetermination to send nine-tenths of his race into a lake of liquid fire and brimstone, there to scald and writhe and screech in agony ineffable, through all the ages of eternity. They have represented him as having decreed that a small remnant should be saved from this fate, and that they should be doomed to a fate almost as horrible—that of sitting eternally around the throne of the infinite despot, and giving unceasing utterance to songs of praise to such a monster of malignity, whilst, in plain sight of them, their mothers, fathers, daughters, sons, wives, husbands, are wallowing and

tumbling in billows of molten fire, roaring in agony, and cursing the God that sent them there, as well they might.

During all these centuries, the belief in such a God has been fastened upon all those Christian sects, by creeds. These creeds are walls made of words, within which souls are immured, and over or under or through or beyond which they must never go, on pain of eternal damnation. There they must remain, feeding on the fare which the clergy provide for them, with every morsel of which the said clergy mix up the God which we have described; and they must never receive any other, however much they may loathe what they are fed on. Never must they range the beautiful fields of philosophy which succeeding ages discover. Never must they listen to a new gospel which presents a better God and a more genial occupation for soul. Never must they hope to be otherwise employed than in singing the praises of the monster fiend on the great white throne. Never must they look for liberty to love that which is lovely and to hate that which is abominable. Life-long slaves they are, within that mural pen of orthodoxy; and nought but eternal slavery or eternal fire, is promised them in the life to come. And this, for all these centuries, has been called religion; and hence the very name has become so impregnated with the odor of orthodoxy and sulphur, that many liberal minds, not considering that the prevalence of a true theism will redeem it, turn from it and reject it entirely. This must not be—it is wrong. Religion, pure and undefiled, is beautiful and lovely; and the name must be redeemed from the foul odium which these centuries of ignorance and priestly corruption have heaped upon it.

There are many honest minded Spiritualists who are almost horrified with the fear of the introduction of creeds and sectarianism, into the Spiritual religion or philosophy. And so fearful are they of this, and so pains-taking are they to prevent it, that they are in great danger of producing the state of things which they eschew, by attracting around them a sufficient number of minds, similarly affected, to constitute an anti-sectarian sect. This, we apprehend, will be the first sect that will be established in the Spiritual fraternity, if ever sectarianism is to be introduced into it at all. And we think we can foretell what will be the articles of faith which will constitute its creed.

The first will be: "There shall never be any creed adopted by this organization." The second will be: "Sectarianism shall forever be repudiated by this sect." The third will be: "Money being the root of all evil, this society will contribute no fund to defray its necessary expenses, or to procure lecturers from abroad; because the Christian sects have provided themselves with houses to meet in, and provided preachers of their false doctrines, by contributions of money; which proves that money is an unholy thing, and ought not to be coveted, had or used, excepting in our individual capacities, or as members of the outside community, where we may be just as avaricious and greedy as any of the other children of Mammon." The fourth will be: "The members of this society shall never assemble together for the purpose of being taught the philosophy of the angels, or to encourage each other to labor zealously and constantly to promulgate and propagate the truth, as they receive it from heaven; for in this way the Christian sects have labored, successfully, to establish those abominable tenets which represent God to be the most cruel of all tyrants, and men to have been created by him, merely to become targets to launch his anathemas against." The fifth and last which we now think of, would be: "As all religions must necessarily have creeds, which are the

ensigns of sectarianism, Spiritualism shall never be regarded as a religion, but as an impervious covering, through which no religion can introduce itself."

We think there are but comparatively few of those who are thus fearful of running into sectarianism, and thus horrified at the name of Religion. And we hope, as the fact that spirits do communicate with mortals, and that they teach the everlasting gospel of truth, becomes more and more generally accepted, the number will become smaller instead of greater; for nothing can be more evident than the palpable fact that Spiritualists cannot possibly have creeds. The very idea of that progression which is the vital principle of Spiritualism, repudiates the possibility of a creed. The adoption of, and adherence to, a creed, put a period to religious progress. Spiritualists do not hold themselves bound to any particular item of faith, even from one day to the next. They hold themselves constantly ready to receive new truths, as they are coming from the infinite fountain of truth, brought to earth by the inhabitants of the upper spheres; and whatever they have learned amiss, they are ever ready to unlearn, and receive the truth in its stead. And, for this purpose, they have determined to "Fix Reason firmly in her seat, and call to her tribunal every question: to question with boldness even the existence of a God; because, if there be one, he must more approve the homage of Reason than that of blindfolded Fear." Yes, Spiritualists have determined never more to hear reason scouted, nor to take any thing otherwise than *ad valorem*, as adjudged by that umpire.

Fear is not in the vocabulary of the true Spiritualist. Hence he does not fear creeds nor sectarianism. He will obey only the first part of the mandate: "Love and fear God; for he has discovered that where fear is, love cannot dwell.

Prayer.

"Do you approve of prayer, addressed to the Father of all Spirits?"

Some people ask questions with an honest purpose of eliciting philosophical answers, from which their minds may be benefitted. Others ask, as the Pharisees questioned Jesus, temptingly, hoping to find, in the answer, something whereon to base a railing accusation. We hope the propounder of the above interrogatory, was actuated by the first named incentive. If, however, he was moved by the latter impulse, we congratulate ourself that this is not Jewry, and that now is not eighteen hundred years ago; so that we can answer ingenuously and unreservedly, without fear of being arraigned before a High Priest, for heresy or blasphemy, or being punished otherwise than by the windy denunciations of bigotry, which fall harmlessly from every object against which they are hurled.

We answer our interrogator, that we do not disapprove prayer to God, if it be not hypocritical. Indeed, whatever a man deems to be his duty, either to his God or to his brother man, he should do, provided that, in doing it, he inflict no injury upon others. And we are certain that every person feels better for doing that which he conscientiously believes to be his duty. There is another consideration in favor of prayer. If we place an impervious covering over an opening flower, it cannot inhale the vital atmosphere, nor receive into its bosom the rains and dews of heaven, whence it derives its freshness, beauty and fragrance; but if we leave it uncovered, it is ready to receive its natural aliment, from the infinite fountain of health and life. So it is with the human soul. If the

man suppose he is putting himself in communion with God, and is about to give utterance to his desires, as to a loving parent, he necessarily puts away from his mind all impure thoughts and worldly aspirations, and lays himself open to spiritual influxes. Ever hovering over every son and daughter of humanity, are the hosts of heaven, all laden with blessings, and watching for opportunities to shed their hallowed and hallowing influences into every soul which is in a condition of recipiency; and thus the honest praying man or woman is benefitted.

We have objections to prayer, which we feel just as much freedom to communicate, as we do to tell wherein we think it may be advantageous. It is our opinion that every word of prayer which is uttered with a view to induce the Great Ruler of the universe to change his purposes, is thrown away. We believe that all the good which is produced by prayer, is in its effect upon the praying mind, as we have described. We believe that every wrong done to a brother or sister, or to one's self, will inevitably bring punishment upon the offender, and that the idea of having sins against each other, and against nature, truth and righteousness, forgiven, by virtue of a prayer to God, is fallacious. The only available prayer, in such case, is heartfelt contrition, and acknowledgement and reparation to the injured party. We believe that, if a man defraud his neighbor out of a dollar, the only effectual prayer for forgiveness, is to go to him, acknowledge the wrong, and give him back his dollar.

The man who spends his whole life in sensual indulgences, and in committing depredations upon the rights of others, never manifesting or feeling sympathy for human suffering, and who calculates on being made a fit associate for archangels, by a few death-bed prayers, will find himself grievously mistaken when he comes to be removed and take position according to his moral and spiritual development. Scores—nay, hundreds—nay, thousands of years may pass over him before he will arrive at the state of development and the condition of happiness which he might have reached at his transition, if his earth-life had been wisely improved. We verily believe—nay, we are positive, that the record, in heaven, of one kind word, uttered to the wretch whom the world tramples upon, will be worth more to the soul who utters it, than all the wordy prayers that could be mouthed to God in a whole life time.

We have heard clergymen announce, from the desk the sickness of a brother, and bespeak, for him, the prayers of the Church.—And when we have heard the recommendation, we have endeavored, in our mind, to estimate the value of those prayers to the sick brother. The idea is that the members of the Church shall clamor in behalf of the sick one, till God shall be induced to interpose a miracle in his favor, and restore him to health, before nature, whose laws have been violated, has time to exert her correcting and recuperative energies.

Now, even if our want of faith should send us to the perdition which the Rev. clergy threaten us with, we could not believe that God waits for some clergyman or religionist to ask him, or direct him, to do a good thing for his human children, before he will do it. Nor do we believe that he withholds the rain, in a dry time, for want of human prayers to stimulate him. Nor can we possibly believe that he ever gives the victory to the army that prays the hardest, in preference to the one that fights the hardest. We are aware that all nations who go to war for the purpose of robbing each other, claim God as their fast friend and ally; and that all their armies are provided with Chaplains, whose duty it is to

shut their eyes and talk to him, very frequently, in which conversations they tell him how great he is, how powerful he is, how wise he is, how just he is, how good he is, how pure he is, how merciful he is, how well he knows that they are in the right and their enemies in the wrong, and how important it is that he shall give them the victory in the coming fight. And we are aware that he is flattered and wheedled in the same manner, and as confidently calculated on, by the other party, whose Chaplain is addressing him at the same moment, in the very longest and most lofty sounding words of another language. But we cannot persuade ourself to believe that he has vanity to be excited by their flattery, or that he interferes at all with the law of cause and effect, so as to give the victory to the one or the other. We do believe that his angels are constantly at work with the minds of men, to induce them to act more wisely than to cut each other's throats; but we do not believe that even they are induced thus to act, by the prayers of men with bloody hands and bloody minds. Nor do we believe that any prayer that was ever uttered by a military Chaplain, ever ascended higher than the top of the flag staff. Yet we think them quite as buoyant as those that are uttered in Churches, in which God is as fulsomely flattered, and as irrationally and as insultingly appealed to for special favors.

It is our opinion that, if God could be offended and disgusted with any of the acts of peccable humanity—which we do not believe—it must be with those who bend their knees to him as if he were an earthly despot, and pour out the mockery of fulsome adulation, couched in the high-sounding phraseology of pharisaic hypocrisy. Notwithstanding that these are our sentiments, we approve and commend the silent, uprising prayer of the truth-loving soul, which is never addressed to mortal ear, but ever ascending, like incense from the altar of purity and love. And we verily believe that every constituent thought of such prayer, is caught by the angels and passed from one to another, up, up, up, through millions of gradations, till it reaches the presence of the Infinite Father.

"It will injure the Cause."

This is what a great many Spiritualists say, and say it with honest convictions, and say it about a great many things and circumstances. If the spirits communicate or manifest through an immoral medium, these nervous ones are afflicted, for fear it will injure the cause. They acknowledge the fact that the spirits do not make media—that nature gives them the qualities which fit them to become aids to communicating spirits—that spirit mediumship is entirely idiocratic, and not to be acquired by study or practice; but still they have painful regrets that spirits do not choose among media, more with a view to their morality than their availability. In all this, there are considerations which they do not seem to allow their proper weight. It is true that a spirit medium is a human being, with a mind—a soul, which will, some time, be such as the communicating spirit is; but, for the purpose of the spirit, a cow, a horse, or even a log of wood, would do just as well, if it had the qualities necessary to the generation of the magnetic atmosphere in which spirits can operate.

There are comparatively few media, through whom spirits can operate powerfully and communicate freely and intelligently; and where there is an organization of the necessary idiocratic temperament, they will use it, however uncultivated or immoral the mind may be. And although it may be deemed a subject of regret that

it is so, spirits inform us that the necessary qualities for mediumship are generally found in higher degree, in those organizations in which amateness and combateness are very prominent. And certainly the most fastidious moralist would not be more surprised at this, than he would be at the fact that the choicest salads have the most poisonous roots. Nor need fearful ones be alarmed for the cause, on this account; for the controlling spirit labors continually to cultivate its medium in every department of character which needs cultivation; so that it is rather a matter of congratulation that they find it necessary to employ immoral media, than otherwise.

"I am sorry to see a spirit medium," says one of these sensitive ones, "making the promulgation of the Spiritual gospel a means of pecuniary thrift. I am very fearful such things will injure the cause." We, too, very much dislike to see manifestations of avarice, in the disposition of any man or woman; and if we more particularly dislike to see it in Spiritualists, it is not because it is any worse in them than it is in other classes of people, but because we, as Spiritualists, are more sensitive to any imputation upon the character of Spiritualists than that of any other class. It cannot be expected that we should not have Spiritualists and even mediums, who are no better than other folks, till they become thoroughly spiritualized. The mere fact that persons have become convinced of the truth that the spirits of the departed do come to them and make their presence known, gives them no claim to moral purity, or even common honesty. Nor is the man or woman any more an angel because nature has furnished him or her with the idiocratic qualities of mediumship. Hence, in an intelligent and philosophical community, there need be no apprehension that the cause will be injured by the immoral proclivities of either believers or media. We tell you, friends, whatever is based upon truth, has an indestructible foundation. Truth is eternal; and though, under some circumstances, it may be "crushed to earth," it can not be held there, but "will rise again." It is as old as God, and with him must be coeternal. If Spiritualism is based upon that foundation, as we hold it to be, it is in no danger from the moral aberrations of its votaries. It is capable of taking care of itself, for all the powers of a thousand worlds cannot prevail against it, to put it down. If, on the contrary, it is founded upon error, we need not be concerned about it, for it is not worth our championship or care. Be not alarmed, then, friends—the cause is in no danger; and if it were, it would not be worth nursing.

Yearly Meeting of Friends of Human Progress.

The eighth annual meeting of this body will be held in Waterloo, Seneca County, New York, commencing on (Sunday) the first of June, at 11 o'clock A. M., and continuing, by adjournments, the two following days, or longer, if deemed expedient. This is a strictly anti-sectarian association. Its basis is as broad as humanity. Its object is the elevation and happiness of man, by the promotion of pure religion and pure morals. And as conducive to these objects, it invites all, with hearts imbued with their importance, to come together, irrespective of creed or denomination, and participate in the proceedings of the meeting—each, as moved to do so, giving utterance to his and her highest and divinest impressions and thoughts. Thus "building each other up in the most holy faith." It is hoped many strong hearts and true will be present. Among others who expect to be in attendance, we are gratified to be able to announce the name of Theodore Parker of Boston. Accommodations will be freely furnished by friends in the vicinity of the meeting, for strangers and others attending. To have this matter in charge, the following were appointed a committee at our last

the heart who dares to look to God and claim some sweet note of affection from his mighty choir of infinite being. Angel hands are tracing on its mystical outlines, the streams of inspired thought; and the perennial flowers which bloom on their banks, exhale in fragrant beauty back to God. So with mind—it may be it cannot resist the passion of prejudice and error; yet he who looks to heaven will see emblazoned on its gilded walls, the law of his Father: "Forgive and forget." The revolutions of the universe of truth, are filled with life and divine animation, from the Great Focus of existence; and he who would annihilate this sacred trust from his heart, would annihilate himself and his God.

Man must become the epitomized form of beauty, in which the outer and inner life blend harmoniously, before he can rise to the higher departments of an unfolding and mighty future. By the analogies of nature, man beholds, positively demonstrated, the continuity of his existence; and the laws of death change not his outward destiny, but ever become the ultimatum of something higher. The burning anxiety of man can only be satisfied by facts. Wave on wave of aspiration of inspired hope—filled with the potency of conviction, comes the yearning soul far into the unknown deep, and on the vast bosom of immensity forms the never-ending galaxy of thought that melts away into unknown spaces, and, mounting still higher throughout the entire constitution of being, extends from God to the universe below, constantly gathering from fathomable depths of immortal truths, the sustenance which the human heart throbs so piteously for. As the outer vision gazes on the starry links in the chain of visible creation, which embellish so magnificently the shoreless ocean of ether, so does the soul look through the cycles of infinity, and find that existence begins and ends alone in God. A simple word of love, to an erring brother, will roll in silent undulations, through the ærial halls of life; whilst a dissonant sound will jar the mighty universe of harmony—a sigh of sorrow agitate the quiet waters of some angel heart, and resound through the heaven above, till, guileless and pure, it rests on the shrine of its God, and cries from within for sympathy, from his eternal bosom. Then on forever, must be the destiny of every soul; for no finality is conceivable throughout the wondrous process of finite and infinite causation. There are deeper regions of action and infinite results, which cannot be viewed or discovered, through the lens of private vision. And he who has read the silent volume and its thoughts fraught with living fire which are transferred from the brilliant page to the altar of the human heart, and strives to subdue the kindling flame, is but replenishing the fire of thought; and his outward form will be first to die and crumble to ashes, while his soul will burn still more brightly with the magnetic resplendencies of a lovelier world. The tender bud of the soul, whose fragile leaves pillow themselves on eternity, and struggle below, with the storms of life, shall, in a better world, twine around the soul of heaven, and, standing on the verge of creation, view the bright heaven's proximity.

Nature is made sacred by the footsteps of God—the pulses of his being are throbbing in the veins of outward life. Every fibre beats with arrow-like swiftness as the soft robes of living beauty encircle our forms, and the air breathes, in a voice of eloquence, the grateful joy of each heart, as it has been made joyous or sorrowful, by the scenes of its earthly probation. The human heart is a sensitive thing; for it, perchance, the winds of deep grief sweep over its bright oasis of happiness, its chords will play like broken reeds with the sad requiem of blasted hopes. Tuneless and voiceless the once gay harp will remain unstrung, until some soft angel tone gently thrills the atmosphere of that heart, till its throbbing becomes quicker, and it awakes from its fitful dream, to find heaven a reality. Then let those who find unkindness the monitor of action, go on—let them profane their God as they may; for if man will not listen to the voice of reason, as he chants his gratitude to God in his earnest prayers for light, we must all wait till time shall have washed away the wreck of mis-directed feeling, and planted the fragrant flowers of contentment and peace on the oasis of that heart, who has long, long revelled in the intoxicating influences of

meeting, viz: George Pryor, village of Waterloo; Henry Bonnel, Margaret Schooley, Abram Vail, and Phebe Dean, town of Waterloo, near the meeting house; Rhoda Palmer, two miles north of Geneva.

Lecture by Prof. Dayton.

MISS BROOKS, MEDIUM.

"They will hear from the deep of the vernal night,
The never forgotten tone,
Of the angel who answers the prayer for light,
When man wrestles with life alone."

The voice of the Almighty is heard as the music of Nature's lyre, whose infinite sweetness hath touched the spirit-strings of the human breast, while immortality still echoes back, from vault to vault, that silent voice of deep impassioned thought, which lures man on to the expanded elements of his own eternal Divinity. The nature and magnitude of the human mind, requires something beside the traditions of the past, on which to subsist; and though through the audience chambers of the soul, the billows of thought ebb and flow with outer strifes, and beat against the unyielding battlements of prejudice, the silent shores of the soul's deep ocean, will be brilliant with diamond beauties, which the receding waves of contention have washed upon their surface, to lighten materiality. Such ones fear to "question boldly the existence of a God"—they dare not believe a fact so wondrously beautiful, for fear *selfhood* may be dethroned and forget its *material* sway. This imaginary element forces men to accept the long fostered inconsistencies of the past, and is the curse of what otherwise would be a happy world. Such ones fear to apply bold science to the existence of a God; for if, perchance, they do, 'twill overthrow the thin fabric of orthodoxy, and reveal nature in her startling philosophic beauty, and its daring position in the broad regions of *christianized infidelity*.

Nature defies orthodoxy, while in its scientific revealments it overthrows the vast colossus of thought, generated from the traditions of the past, and boldly establishes the vast empire of living truth, generated from the heart of God. Let every one, endowed with faculties of reason, without superstitious apprehensions, question the existence of man, of angels and of God. The hope of immortality should not be productive of fear, but should be brilliant with the light of joy; and by an influx of superior information, rend the dark curtain of superficiality from off the windows of the mind, and let aspiring genius proudly and nobly explore that unseen existence of man, and, without fear, let nature retain its complacency and perpetuate its undying charms and beauties, even though man, in his folly of fear, has clothed the natural garden of heaven with a dark pall, terrible as the angel of an exasperated God. Fear teaches millions of souls that they are thrown into the inconceivable horrors of an unending burning abyss, whose dissolving flames are kindled by the breath of a loving Father. What an impious charge! and its influence is too corroding to the finer sensibilities of the mind, for the most distorted and deranged imagination to give existence to. What horrible profanation of the God of love! This idea is claimed to have been existant in the soul of Deity, before man was created; and where, if this be so, rests the responsibility of man's final happiness or misery? for man is as much at the will of his Creator as the leaf is at the will of the wind. God alone is wholly and entirely responsible for every misdirected act; and if he confines one soul to burning flames, he commits suicide; for man is a portion of himself; and as the sun absorbs the drops from the ocean, so would this eternal Hades absorb atoms of intelligence from the living constitution of the eternal Source, until the God of heaven would become the controlling power of hell; for if misdirection is man's curse, forever and ever, but few would sit on the "great white throne" chaunting praise to God, for ever and ever. This idea bears no evidences of consistency, and flows from absolute and unequivocal fear. It would be as consistent and proper to believe that the laws of organic life had changed—to believe physiological principles are now different

from those instituted in past generations, as it is to believe, at this modern age, that an eternal punishment is only an allegorical representation of the soul in its condition in heaven, governed exclusively by law. This idea is becoming obsolete in the nineteenth century, while it was prevalent in past ages. And why so vast a change? Because science has boldly and fearlessly questioned this preposterous idea, and overthrown, in part, the deleterious influence of fear, while nature refuses positively to listen to such a sacrilege upon its own divinity, and upon the Author of its beauties. All effects must correspond with causes; and if all the readings of the Bible were from celestial influxes, then effects would have corresponded, or nature's effects would correspond with its causes. Then forever and ever repudiate that which is contradictory of the beauty and purity of God.

The angel world is governed by association and refinement; and it is the nature of the immortal soul to seek its associations, wherein they may be free; and it is also the nature of an angel to appreciate the associations it forms from the spontaneous impulses of its affectional inclinations, which are governed by the internal and finer sensibilities and affections of the soul. And if the human heart is truly appreciative, it will behold an admiring wisdom in the displaying beauties of nature, as it presents constant indications which carry the mind to the deep and solemn veneration of the first Great Cause.

The motions of human life prove conclusively, to the liberal mind, the progression of man. This proves the future life beyond a doubt, and demonstrates it positively, as eternal as the infinite laws of the universe. Then let men, even though they fail to see the beauty of angelic ministry, practise the law of kindness to all the inmates of palace halls, as well as the beggar at the door; for, in heaven, worldly distinctions are nought. Man, there, is not judged by the weight of his gold, but by the merits and demerits of his developed mind. Let kindness reign supreme in the audience chambers of the soul, and its branches will bud and blossom in beauty, and diffuse the fragrance of universal benevolence, over the broad plain of human intelligence. Let not the divinity of God be profaned by ungentle tones and unkind words, but let it become a living manifestation of loving kindness, and the bright universe of undying beauty will appear in gorgeous magnificence, while angels will bear to God the prayer of each earnest heart. Truth must be crushed, if ever it is crushed, by the soul that gave it birth; and man's efforts are feeble in striving to overthrow the basis on which God rests his unlimited form of being. For mind, by mathematical analysis, is capable of penetrating the heavens and counting the stars. Yes, and to rend the veil of death and behold the illuminations of his immortality.

The human soul, midst all the storms of its existence, is but bathing its form in the bright waters of experience, and pluming its wings to soar amidst the untold ages of an unending future, where, free to think, it will joyously fold its pinions, to rest on the bosom of immortality, and yearn no more for its transition to the skies. Let the thunders of contention agitate the bosom of unrestricted thought; let the winds of prejudice blow fearfully around your hearts; 'twill but wreck the inconsistencies borrowed from antiquity; and when all is calm and quiet, the reflected images of angels, will be seen, in the gilded waters of Truth, whose tones of thrilling melody sweep across the chords of each heart, revealing a deeper and holier strain of music, which must meet its responses, in the depths of Immortality.

Let inspired hope buoy up the soul, in hours of discontent, while around you, nature never disponds, but the leaves tell some angel tale of love; the flowers speak of the epic beauty of Heaven, and the limpid stream discourses in its onward-rolling waves, the music eloquence and veneration of its God. Each decayed branch reveals in its inanimate form, the law of an unending progression. Then to all I would say, be faithful to the sacred trust assigned you, by a living Father, from whom each derives the blessings which surround them, in their continued finite existence; for though earth should turn the other way on its axis heaven would never desert you, in the hours of trial and contention.—

Strive to let contentment reign joyously supreme, as o'er the surging ocean of time you move, and your destiny will be, to land safely and unharmed, on the brighter side of that mighty suspension bridge, which extends from the soul of God, to the heart of man, and on whose firm and eternal wires of affection, angels are passing and repassing, bearing to earth the brightest flowers, culled from the garden of an eternal Eden. From the paradise of Hope they come, laden with the fragrant perfume of an unutterable joy, which exhales in fondest sweetness, through the recesses of the human mind, to vivify and refresh that hope of immortal life, which seems nearly lifeless.

Charactered in lines of love, on the enamelled walls of Heaven, are the unfading beauties of those below, who have, thus far, braved the storms of prejudice; and ever through the life yet to come, while the archangels chant a song of gratitude, to those who unblushingly looked to God, and responded to their own secret interrogatories, *I am Immortal*. Once again Yours Truly,

E. C. DAYTON.

A Short Sermon by Gow jr.

TEXT:—"The sun shines bright in the old Kentucky home,
Tis summer the darkies are gay."

My friends, the text says, the sun shines bright; and so it does to-day, and let us hope it may not only continue to pour its genial rays upon, and over this terraqueous globe, warming all things into new life and vigor, and strength and beauty, but that the brightness of his shining may illumine the darkened spots of the human heart; for heaven knows there is need enough, for a land and more than has seemed to fall to man's lot in the days gone by.

My hearers, "The sun shines bright."—The text is written this blessed May morning, on the hill-tops, and on the bosom of the placid lake. Ten thousand birds, robin-red-breasts and larks, and orioles are proclaiming the joyous fact, from ten thousand boughs of ten thousand trees, and the silver sheen of the still waters is reflected back upon the fleecy clouds, so gaily floating on the the velvet bosom of the ambient air. Why does the sun shine? Who kindles up the fires in his furnaces, or lights his magnificent electric lantern? a lantern and a light much superior to Paine's or Taylor's or Randolph's or Willards famous electric light. Oh, yes my hearers, it is far more perfect, yet who lights it? "God does," indeed, how do you know that? "Well nature tells me so." Very well, I will not quarrel with you about definitions, only I will say that you assume more knowledge than you can substantiate. Power lights the sun, and in the deepest sense, power is Diety—perhaps—but we have nothing to do with such transcendental metaphysical abstractions to-day, because—"The sun shines bright." There is a gorgeous flood of radiance streaming this morning, over the earth, and "Tis summer." Oh! how happy that one word makes our hearts; the winter has passed away and nature has burst the iron dress she had arrayed herself in, in order that she might storm the fortress of the Frost King. She accomplished her object, met the foe, sustained the brunt of battle for six long and ice-marked months, and after one of the most desperate struggles on record, routed the enemy—put to flight his great generals Boreas, and Norther, and Old Storm-along-Stormy, and in short gained a complete victory—for "Tis summer."

The third point of the text informs us that the "Darkies are gay." The point to be determined here, my friends, in what is the legitimate meaning of the word "Darkey." My archeological and philological researches, I am happy to inform you, has resulted favorably to the clearing up of the dense obscurity hitherto enshrouding the sentence under consideration. Darkey is a word compounded of the Hebrew "da," the Welch "rk," and the American Indian "ey." The article da, means light, and is a short way of writing day. Now light and intelligence are synonyms, and can only be justly predicated of man, in the text under consideration, for it is expressly stated that the Darkeys are gay. Now gaiety means mirth, joyousness and laughter. Man is the only being or animal that laughs; hence the conclusion is irresistible that the learned author of the text meant man. The meaning of

the Welch term "rk," is obscuration or eclipse, and thus the word "dark," means man's mind in a state of eclipse or obscuration. The terminal "ey," signifies false glory—politics and cash, and the whole word, translated freely into our vernacular signifies, "Man's mind in a state of obscuration or eclipse by false glory, politics and cash, or gold." But the text inform us that the Darkeys are gay, because the sun shines bright. The second part, which I passed over, is, to the effect that the sun shines bright in the "Old Kentucky Home." Old, means orthodox and orthodox means brimstone tea, ken, is of the order Cain; Cain killed his brother, and this order is founded by his followers, who do not however perpetuate the killing of bodies, like their great predecessor but rather aim to kill the mind, by uniting the practices of both the original brothers, Cain and Abel. Abel was a shepherd, be it remembered, and is said by the great historian, I don't know who, to have dealt largely in Wool, and his followers, the members of the order ken—who as a distinguishing mark, wear long faces and white neck-ties, employ all their time in pulling that staple commodity over the eyes of the outside barbarians, and throwing dust in the eyes of the laity of their own order. The article "tuck," means stealing, and is the *Scandalavian* word for legal thieving, as the order of ken always go upon the principle of getting all they can and keeping all they get. They have a banner with a cross on it thus, †, which means "Don't cross our path if you do you'll catch *anathema maranatha*," which being translated means "Jesse," a word which signifies "Particular Fits." The surpliced members of the order ken, have a secret pass-word, "Tekel," which means scale—in fact they are a scaly set, and taken altogether their weighs are very bad. Scales come from the inhabitants of the sea, and it is the ancient emblem of Justice, but instead of being loving, kind and tender hearted, the great majority of the order are *just-ice* and nothing warmer.

The surpliced members of this order being a scaly set, are very fond of fish, and hence their constant cry is "Loaves and Fishes." This cry has been repeated so often that a large number of people have altered the first word, and whenever they are compelled to listen to the peculiar teachings of the surpliced members of the order of ken, which teachings are by way of distinguishment from other orations called "Rigmarole." (Rig—from their constant habit of running rigs upon the people. MA the corruption of the word "my," and "role," the French term for the part performed by an actor in a play; thus rigmarole means "The rigs I run upon the people.") There is, I repeat a large number of people called Spiritualists, who, whenever they hear the word "Fish," invariably respond "Pish!" which exceedingly irritates the ken, and like a herring they stick their victims full of Ich-theologic bones, freshly caught from the waters of the sea of Hell-io-gabulus, or else like the electric eel, they shock their opponents, with an element derived from the Patent Sulphur-battery, invented by one John Milton, and rendered popular by a certain elder Knapp.

The terminal "ky," pronounced kee, is derived from the language of a people who dwell on the borders of the kingdom of common sense, called "Ninney" the word means "Iron-bound, indigo-hued." The word home means "The land we live in." And thus my hearers, you understand the text, and the derivation of the learned words of which it is composed, and now let us find the application. The whole text is part of an orphic hymn, sung by the people not long ago. It is the announcement of the fact that hope has at last broken through the dogma-crust ed encasements of the popular brain, and that the sunshine by which the great Poet who wrote the verse, no doubt meant Spiritual light from the other side of the dark river—has at last melted the stubborn ice of humanity, and is rousing the ungenial soil of the spirit to a vigorous effort to throw off its many gyves and shackles, and declare its native love for freedom, and right to the enjoyment of its natural privileges.

"The sun shines bright in the old Kentucky home,

"Tis summer the Darkeys are gay,"

is a glorious truth, my friends. And it is a sure prophecy that it will

continue to shine, and dispense not only heat and light, but love and beauty, until the old Ken—tuc—kee, or creed bound world shall be freed from the poisonous miasmas of superstition. And the DARKEYS or men whose minds are eclipsed and obscured by false glory politics and lucre—shall be no longer occulted by the dense clouds of error. Such is my rendition of the ancient text. And that the summer will come over the human mind, all its waste places, and that the sterile wilderness may soon blossom like the Rose, is my humble prayer. So mote it be.

GOW JR.

The Angel Watcher.

A daughter watched at midnight
Her dying mother's bed;
For five long nights she had not slept,
And many a tear was shed;
A vision like an angel came,
Which none but her might see;
"Sleep duteous child," the angel said,
"And I will watch for thee!"

Sweet slumber, like a blessing, fell
Upon the daughter's face,
The angel smiled, and touched her not,
But gently took her place;
Ah! oh! so full of human love,
Those pitying eyes did shine,
The angel guest half mortal seemed,
The slumberer half divine.

Like rays of light the sleeper's locks
In warm, loose curls were thrown;—
Like rays of light the angel's hair
Seemed like the sleeper's own;
A rose-like shadow on the cheek;
Dissolving into pearl;
A something in the angel's face,
Seemed sister to the girl.

The mortal and immortal each
Reflecting each were seen;
The earthly and the spiritual
With death's pale face between.
O, human love, what strength like thine?
From thee those prayers arise,
Which, entering into Paradise,
Draws angels from the skies.

The dawn looked thro' the casement cold,
A wintry dawn of gloom,
And sadder showed the curtained bed—
The still and sickly room;
My daughter!—art thou there, my child?
O, haste thee, love, come nigh,
That I may see once more thy face,
And bless thee ere I die!

"If ever I were harsh to thee;
Forgive me now," she cried;
"God knows my heart: I loved thee most
When most I seemed to chide;
Now bend and kiss thy mother's lips,
And for her spirit pray."
The angel kissed her—and her soul
Passed blissfully away!

A sudden start!—what dream, what sound,
The slumbering girl alarms?
She wakes—she sees her mother dead
Within the angel's arms—
She wakes—she springs with wild embrace,
But nothing there appears,
Except her mother's sweet dead face—
Her own convulsive tears.

The South Wind.

South wind softly blowing,
Balmy is thy breath,
Gentle as a spirit,
Stealing o'er the heath.

Thou hast passed o'er flowers,
Blooming in the Spring;
Bearing with thee odors,
On thy cloudy wing.

Of green fields thou' mind'st me,
Of the forest tree;
Of all the buds and blossoms,
Talkest thou to me.

When the stars are shining,
Softly o'er the air
Floats a misty vapor,
Telling thou art there.

Bathing all things living
That thou breathest on;
Making low, sweet music,
With thy gentle tone.

South Wind! I do love thee,
For thou brings't to me
Music, beauty, gladness,
And I welcome thee.

Gentleness.

If thou hast crushed a flower,
The root may not be blighted—
If thou hast quenched a lamp,
Once more it may be lighted;
But on thy harp, or on thy lute,
The string which thou hast broken,
Shall never in sweet sound again,
Give to thy touch a token!

If thou hast loosed a bird,
Whose voice of song could cheer thee,
Still, still, he may be won
From the skies, to warble near thee;
But if upon the troubled sea,
Thou hast thrown a gem unheeded,
Hope not that wind or wave shall bring
The treasure back when needed.

If thou hast bruised a vine,
The summers breath is healing,
And its clusters yet may grow
Thro' the leaves their bloom revealing;
But if thou hast a cup o'erthrown,
With a bright draught filled—O, never
Shall the earth give back that lavish wealth
To cool thy parch'd lip's fever.

The heart is like that cup.
If thou waste the love it bore thee,
And like that jewel gone,
Which the deep will not restore thee—
And like that string of harp and lute
Whence the sweet sound is scattered—
Gently, O gently touch the cords
So soon forever shattered!

ERRATA.—In Prof. Dayton's Lecture, page 517, after the first 11 lines of 1st paragraph turn to 2d column, page 516.

P. B. RANDOLPH gave a third Lecture, in Townsend Hall, on Thursday evening, with which the audience were highly gratified. We have not room to say more.

AGE OF PROGRESS.

STEPHEN ALBRO... EDITOR.
THOMAS GALES FORSTER,

Corresponding Editor and Agent.

OFFICE OVER STEPHENSON'S JEWELRY STORE, 200 MAIN ST. SECOND STORY.

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All communications and letters of business concerning the Age of Progress must be addressed to the proprietors, Messrs. Murray & Baker.

Buffalo Harmonial Conference.

According to previous announcement, we had lectures, or orations, on Sunday last, through the organism of P. B. RANDOLPH. In the afternoon, we had a discourse from the spirit of ROBERT BURNS, on the text: "A man's a man for a' that;" which will be recognized by the reader as the burden of one of his own poems. This discourse, if we appreciate rightly, was not only characterized by a high order of philosophy, but was sublimely beautiful. We have ever been a warm admirer of BURNS, from our earliest acquaintance with him as a poet; and there is a possibility that this circumstance may have biased our judgment. Be that as it may, we would be willing to go a day's journey, at any time, to hear the same discourse repeated, through the same organism.

In the evening we had a profoundly philosophical discourse, from the spirit of that king of Grecian orators, DEMOSTHENEES. His subject was: "What and where is God." And although the subject did not seem to be beyond the grasp of that archangelic mind, it is too great for the comprehension of any incarnate spirit. The effort was a tremendous one; and such was the power exerted by the controlling spirit, that it seemed as if the organism of the medium was in danger of explosion.

Spiritual Lecture.

We can now announce to our readers, that they will receive, through the columns of the *Age of Progress*, a new series of lectures from the circle of spirits which have the management of spiritual matters in this city and vicinity. The first lecture of the new series, which is from the spirit of EDGAR C. DAYTON, will be found in this number.

It was desired, by the disembodied authors, that the most important of the lectures published in our first volume, should be transferred to the present volume, on account of its better form for preservation.—This having been accomplished, a new series has been commenced, which we hope will prove to be still more interesting, if possible, than the first series. They come, as before, through the mediumship of Miss BROOKS.

J. B. Conklin.

This extraordinary test medium, is now in this city, occupying a room over this office—200 Main street, where he is receiving visits from mortals in the flesh, and their immortal friends from the spirit land. It seems to be a glorious office, to be the medium through whom friends of earth and heaven are brought together again, after having been long separated by what we have been taught to call death.

Change of Life.

Mrs. DELILA, wife of WILLIAM SYLVESTER, left her physical form on Thursday, the 22d inst. Her funeral will take place at 9 o'clock on Saturday morning, 24th inst., at her late residence, 209 North Division street. It is expected that the spirit of STEPHEN R. SMITH will deliver an address, on the occasion, through the organism of Mr. FORSTER. All who will, are invited to attend.

—We take the following from "*The Truth Seeker*."

"*The Age of Progress*—Buffalo, N. Y. STEPHEN ALBRO, Editor. Two dollars per annum. This paper has finally made its appearance in our office—bearing on her wings words of truth and soberness. We hail all such with pleasure, and love their company well: because of the gleanings of truth we find in their pages. We have been tempted by the long delay of some of our co-laborers in reform, to inquire after the cause. We have feared that some of our well dressed city laborers were ashamed of our rude country dress, custom and manners, and perhaps provoked at our importunate "Please X." If such be the case with any, we ask their forbearance, and would remind them of the encouraging fact that we are not near so green, rude and countryfied, as we once were. So much for the good effect of your forbearance brethren, in letting your next door neighbors call to see us."

We acknowledge our tardiness, and hope our worthy brother will accept the apology which we are about to make. We received his first number when we were so much engaged that we could not give it even a cursory perusal, and laid it by for further inspection and consideration. In the mean time some one of our reading visitors made it his own, *sans ceremonie*; and the address had not been registered upon our memory. The next number came, and we requested a young gentleman who took it out of the envelop and was reading it, to enter it on our subscription list, which he promised to do, but did it not. On the reception of the third number, we put it on the list, not so much because it asked for an exchange, as for the fact that we had found it to be worthy of more respectful treatment than we had extended to it. We like its tone and its spirit, and bid it thrice welcome to the field of labor which it has entered.

The *Truth Seeker* is published weekly, at Angola, Indiana, by A. P. BOWMAN and E. B. LANDEN, at one dollar and fifty cents per annum, invariably in advance, and is more than worth the money.

Let us add to this notice, that we are not among those who fear to notice our cotemporaries of the Spiritual fraternity, or to copy from their columns, lest we should give them too much notoriety for our own interest. We have ever pursued what we deemed to be a liberal course, in these respects, and so shall continue to do, even with those whose aim seems to be to keep us in the back ground.

New Publication.

We have received, from the publishers, WENTWORTH & Co. Boston, a new work, entitled *Theognis*. A lamp in the cavern of Evil, by CATIUS, Junior.

It is a colloquy between an old philosopher, whom the author has christened MALEIA, and a young student, whom he calls EDWIN.

Their conversation is occasionally broken in upon, or relieved, by a third party who takes the character of a kind of king's fool, or jester. The philosophical proposition aimed to be established by MALEIA, is that there is no positive evil. The subject appears to be handled learnedly and with ability, as far as we have had time to follow him. The style is very pleasant; and, although PHELM, the jester, is not to our taste, falling short, as we think, of the classical wit which he seems to aim at, the other characters more than make up his deficiency. The book is well gotten up and well worth the dollar which is charged for it.

Correspondence.

BROTHER ALBRO :

Among the variety of highly interesting articles contained, from time to time, in your paper, one which struck me as pre-eminently meritorious, is contained on the first three pages, of the May 10th number, under the caption of "There ought to be a law enacted making them indictable." I think the writer of it is justly deserving of a Gold Medal, for so fitly fulfilling the wise man's injunction of "Answering a fool according to his folly." My only regret about the article is, that it should fall under the notice of so few, as the readers of a Spiritual paper. If you had printed a thousand copies of this one article, extra, and bound them in pamphlet form, it would have afforded me much satisfaction to have taken a couple of hundred and placed them where just such literature is needed, viz: among such a class of persons as are akin in sentiment to the "limb-of-law" individual who uttered the holy malediction which was employed as a text for the article in question.

The writer of the article, while dilating upon the "Ark," and the supposed amount of provender for a year, rating for mastodons, elephants, &c., might have raised the query: How many times the timber composing the Ark had to be renewed during the hundred and twenty years it was in building? For, a man-of-war which was commenced no longer ago than during the last war, which is in the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and has been well housed to protect it from the weather, it is said could not now be completed without replacing a large proportion of her timbers. But this and all other troublesome questions which reason and philosophy detect in the orthodox formula, may be disposed of on the hypothesis that sectarian faith, like Love, being *blind*, requires no solutions.

If more of the matter contained in our progressive journals was of a character to exhibit the bible and orthodox religion in its true light, more good would be accomplished, I apprehend, than by confining themselves so exclusively to the more specific subject of Spiritualism and its various phases; for, as two substances cannot occupy the same space, so progress in an enlightened religious philosophy, cannot be made while the mind is prepossessed by error.

Truly Yours,

V. C. TAYLOR.

NIAGARA FALLS, May 18th, 1856.

For the Age of Progress.

Notes taken by the Man about Town.

"Stop thief! Stop thief! Head him off! Head him off!"—were sounds that struck harshly and ominously on my ears, as I recently passed down a crowded thoroughfare in the great commercial metropolis of the Western World. And simultaneously with the cry, I heard the labored pantings of a poorly clad, and haggard visaged son of toil, and care, and sad misfortune;—one of those blisters and excrescences of the body politic,—the normal and legitimate production of the conglomerate, which, in this our 19th century calls itself Society; a misname certainly, if the term is intended to convey an idea of the union of human beings, and an aggregation of immortal souls,—imperishable spirits, yet in the rudimental state of being, but destined by the GREAT ONENESS to a life beyond this vale of tears, and sobs, and heart-rent

sighs;—a life full of unfading beauties, and glories, and prayers for the achievement of untold good, in that brighter and better land, whither all mankind are slowly, but surely tending;—that

"That beautiful clime that lieth sublime

Out of Space, out of Time,"—

where the wicked shall trouble no more, and where the full and true fruition of man's dearest, best and choicest aspirations shall be realized—where the pure shall grow purer, and weary, care and toil-worn souls shall hang their harps upon the willows, and cease to weep;—where the sad soul shall, in peace, sit down and lift up its voice in lamentation no more forever; for it shall there gaze upon the pearly wavelets

"Of a river brightly glowing

From eternal fountains flowing,

Where the tree of life is growing

Ever, EVER, EVERMORE."

Soon the poor wretch turned a corner, leaped a fence and, as it seemed to me, escaped the eager pursuit of his would be captors. I stood still, while the clamorous crowd went by me in hot haste, as if eager for the heart's blood of their panting and affrighted fugitives.

Some years before the events I am describing, I had spent some time in the Western States, among my kindred, the red men of the forest.—There I took great delight in the study of dogs, and had a particular fancy for a couple of Cuba bloodhounds, presented to Ke-nah-wah, the Chief, by a friend. These dogs were of the most gentle aspect generally, and the little Indian children frequently used them as horses; similar sights may be seen wherever there is a child and a large dog. But once set these two animals on the scent of a deer, wolf, or bear, and all their gentleness was gone in an instant, for, then, nothing short of the heart's warm blood of the doomed game, would satisfy the ferocity of their natures or glut their thirst for destruction. And as I stood beside the awning post, on which I had been leaning, I could not for the life of me, help running a parallel, between the brute bloodhounds of by-gone memory, and the human wretches, who were thus hunting a poor and wretched man to destruction. Poor and wretched indeed was he; for, driven by the pangs of hunger, he had dared to stretch forth his hand, and snatch a loaf of bread from the window of a baker, who rolled in luxury and wealth. And for this crime, this high handed outrage, this robbery of three pounds of bread, to feed his starving wife and children;—for this crime, I repeat, a thousand men were pursuing, him to the death.

What is it in man that thus prompts him to rejoice at the downfall and triumphs in the destruction of a fellow mortal? and echo answers "What?"

There is a *something* not right in man! We talk of philanthropy, and brotherly love and kindness, we prate much of charity and the virtues, yet where is it to be seen? and again echo answers "where?"

Several years ago, while in Europe, I was, one morning, attracted by a large crowd hastening in the direction of the jail. It seemed to be a gala day, and I asked the reason of the throng. Soon my enquiries were satisfied; for I learned that Hell held high wassail that morning, for there was to be a judicial murder. That morning there

—"was a sound of revelry,

And England's capital had gathered there,"

her myrmidons to strangle two beings. Aye! Hell—if there be a Hell—opened wide her jaws for a man: two men were to die by the halter, and thirty thousand men and women, old and young, were on their way to witness the glorious monument of the genius of the 19th century—a GALLOWS, erected by charity and love—by the *followers* of the meek and holy Jesus, on which to choke two men to death, for poaching on Lord Derby's manor, and wounding the game-keeper with a club when caught.

Under the scaffold, young girls with full baskets were crying: "Apples and oranges, nuts and taffy, all fine and fair and fresh." Even little girls and boys were there to see the fun and to witness the death strug-

gle of a fellow mortal. I lifted up my voice and wept aloud. Oh, God, I cried, canst thou permit such things. Is there, *is there* any balm in Gilead? is there any good in man?

Let us return: I was mistaken; the thief had not escaped, Oh, no! he had sought refuge in an old by-lane or alley, from whence he was dragged, all dirty and torn, and bleeding from the valiant efforts of thirty stout men; each of whom took an apparently heartfelt pride in visiting the atrocious offender with a sense of his own personal indignation, in the shape of sundry blows, and cuffs, and *manly* kicks, all because the victim was poor and meanly clad, and because gaunt want had written in very legible lines, the word "poverty" in every feature.—Strange what discernment people have!

Two hours before that, a gentleman,—made so by the tailor,—had grossly insulted a poor sewing girl on one of the public streets, and when her indignant brother had, in the exasperation of the moment, knocked the fellow down, the *discriminating* mob, and the *still more* discriminating police officers raised the gentleman from the gutter and bore him tenderly to the first apothecary shop, where the utmost effort was made to restore his physical equilibrium, and two other discriminating officers arrested "the villainous brother" and dragged him off to jail. What right had he to protect his sister's honor? he, indeed! Well, to resume the sketch. The poor wretch was taken before the Cadi, or Justice, or whatever else his title may be.

Mechanically I followed the crowd, and on the way called upon a friend of mine who attended me to the Court House; and, when all hope had apparently forsaken the poor culprit, he stepped forth and went bail for his appearance at the proper time. Now a remarkable change took place. Mr. Toons,—my friend, was worth half a million dollars, and as soon as it was known that *he* had become interested in the thief, fifty more persons offered their services to befriend him also. Strange thing art thou, Oh human heart!

The solution of this and other apparently inconsistent practices of man, is to be found in the fact that he is yet a child, and all children are more under influence of impulse than of reason; and there are all the other marks of childhood, beside. Now I take it for granted that the race will ere long develop into a condition, when the cool clear data of reason will form the departure point of human action, and thenceforth the proneness of childhood will be put away for the better things pertaining to the Man—the true selfhood, for

The gloomy night is breaking,
E'en now the sunbeams rest,
With a faint, yet cheering radiance,
On the hill-tops of the West.
The mists are slowly rising
From the valley and the plain,
And the Spirit is awaking,
That shall never sleep again.
Then, onward, upward, Heavenward,
The Spirit still will soar,
Till peace and love shall triumph,
And discord reigns no more.

SHIP STRUCK BY A WATERSPOUT.

An officer on board of the English man-of-war *Electra*, describes a fearful encounter with a waterspout which happened to the ship in November last, while sailing from Buckland, in New Zealand, to Sydney. The weather for some time had been remarkably heavy, and on the day on which the ship was caught in the waterspout had been very squally. The writer was below when the spout struck the vessel, and was greatly startled by seeing the ship keel far over and the deck become almost perpendicular, and a sick feeling of anticipation and vague dread came over his mind. He succeeded in reaching the deck, and found the captain's gig was stove in by the water, and the davits (strong, curved pillars of iron, as thick as his leg) had been bent double by the pressure. A whirling mass of water had been suddenly seen near the ship, bearing her down and whisking her around and round

under water, whilst the whirlwind by which it was of course accompanied and caused, pressed her over by the sails and increased the danger.

From the North West Orient.

Progression is a Law of the Universe.

BY IRA PORTER.

Progression is a law of the Universe. There are minds who deny this, and insist that the works of God are as likely to retrograde as to advance. This is no trivial question, and the mind should come up to its investigation with great candor and earnestness.

Has that which has previously existed reached the maximum of its perfection? Was it an ultimatum or a means—a means for the present? And is not the present but the transition state to a future of greater perfection? The universe is a universe of ceaseless activities.—Not one particle of its matter is at rest. Change—perpetual, pausless change is going on in all that we see, and in all things beyond our sight. With the aid of the telescope, we look away towards what, to our feeble comprehension, seems the confines of space; there, too, is eternal motion—worlds and systems of worlds moving onward and onward, pausing not, but tireless as that infinite energy that first called them into being.

It is not alone in the shape of suns and moons and planets, that matter carries on its ceaseless motion. In the inmost recesses of the mineral world, matter, urged forward by the law of affinity, is constantly combining and separating, organizing and dissolving its organizations. In all these changes, developing more and more of refinement. We look out upon the world in which we live; under our feet is what we call earth; above us are what we call skies. Around us is a medium that supplies our breath and thence our life; and this we call the atmosphere. Nearly three-fourths of the surface of this globe, we call earth, is water—a medium more refined than the earth, more gross than the atmosphere, but an indispensable agent in producing and sustaining the countless forms of organic life with which we are surrounded. In a clear evening, standing upon this planet, we raise our eyes towards the heavens, and we see thousands of twinkling luminaries, known by the name of stars. Without the aid of a telescope, these appear to us as mere trinkets to adorn our skies. If we pass from this curiosity and superficial view of the physical universe to a minute and careful inspection of the form of organic life, we soon satisfy ourselves that wisdom and design pervade the whole, and that what we see is produced by some intelligence infinitely beyond our comprehension. And the mind instinctively asks the question—When, how, and by whom this was made? It may reasonably be supposed that the answers returned would be as varied as the intelligence of the enquirers.

This question was asked thousands of years ago, and thousands of years ago was answered. By whom was it answered? Three-fourths of the Christian world will tell you it was answered by a direct revelation from the Maker to Moses. Reason suggests that millions of men and women who lived and died before Moses, and that as fully needed and as ardently yearned for light as he asked the same question.

If God condescends to open his lips and orally commune with men, who can tell why the desired response was so long withheld? Why made to but one when all are equally interested in knowing.

The history of man, the various and conflicting theories that have been advanced concerning the origin and progress of creation, demonstrate that the Infinite Mind, who planned the Universe, has wisely referred the enquirer to the universe itself for a response to that enquiry, When, how, and by whom was it made?

From the deep silence of infinitude, the listening spirit hears this paternal response—Go, my son, and search my works, and Science shall answer thy enquiries. Scan the heavens and delve into the earth.—Whatever you see, mark it well. I have, through all the realms of nature, left such traces of my handiwork that, in studying them, you may learn what you so much desire to know. If you are led through mazes of

doubt, despair not; the secret will in due time be unfolded to him who works and waits with patience. If you do not speedily learn what you desire at once to know, let this be your consolation: the search shall invigorate your spirit and multiply your enjoyments.

The answer to the question—when, how, and by whom, was the Universe made—claimed to have been given by God to Moses, has, until a few years, satisfied that portion of mankind called the Christian world, that the sun, the moon and the stars (embracing the planets) were all made, about six thousand years ago, in six days of twenty-four hours each, by God, laboring that time; that during that period of labor, he got fatigued, rested the seventh day, and was refreshed.—Ex. xxxi. 17. Those who assume that God personally revealed the time and manner of this creation of the world to Moses, believe that God made his work very perfect at first, that it soon became very much deranged in consequence of man's sin. All of this class of persons oppose the doctrine of progression on the ground that it is directly opposite to the Divine Revelations contained in the Bible.

The question whether the doctrine of progressive development is true or false is one of vast moment. It is not a matter of indifference, as (I trust I shall hereafter clearly show) whether it be decided one way or the other. Our enjoyment in the present, our hope in the future, our safety and stability whether acting in our present character as men, or in a future character as angels, is all involved in the question whether progression is or is not a law of the Universe.

Popular theory assumes that in six days God made all things and pronounced them good; that he made out of the dust of the earth one man, out of his rib one woman, both physically beautiful and morally pure.

That man, by disobedience to his law, became totally depraved in morals and deeply diseased in his physical organs, and finally subject to death, and through death to loathsome putridity and ultimate decay, and his posterity not only subject to the same disaster, but to perpetual alienation from all goodness and all happiness, except a few who should be able to achieve an effort of credulity called faith, and that these are to be exempted from Hell and to spend an eternity of perpetual praise, on account of such exemption; that this fair world that He has made is to be destroyed as worthless, and the space it occupies filled with a new creation, subject, for aught any one can tell, to a like disaster.

It is true the promise of a God is claimed as a pledge of its stability and beauty, but it is of a God who, according to their own assumptions, repents and is disappointed, and, for aught we know, is liable to the same causalities hereafter as he has been heretofore. Yea, the believers in popular mythology go much farther, and inform you that the angels of heaven are impure in his sight, and that myriads of those whom he had created to be his perpetual servants night and day, and who had, for countless ages, ministered unto him in the courts of his glory, were also seized with the principles of retrogression, became ambitious, and, for the purpose of promoting their selfish aims, raised rebellious war of physical force, and upon the very plains of heaven waged a furious fight with the Most High and his loyal angelic troops.

What desponding, sickening fears must seize that mind who believes this! What angel and arch-angel, cherubim and seraphim, those who had been in the sight of God "when the morning stars sang together," who had for countless ages inspired the nectar of truth as it flowed fresh from its fountain at the throne of the Almighty, who had all that time, listened to the language of Divine wisdom as it fell from the lips of Omniscience, who had studied the celestial harmony of Divine love as manifested in all the societies of the pure and the blessed, through all the realms of his celestial kingdom, in spite of all this knowledge, all this love, inwrought as it must have been into every fibre of their being, seized with a petty ambition for personal glory, and thenceforward the ministers of discord, the foes of goodness, waging eternal war with the happiness of the Universe, and especially against their own.

If their experience of the attractions of Divine wisdom and goodness

was not sufficient to control their action, alas! for the hopes of terrestrial saints. "Final perseverance" and continual happiness is a baseless contingency. In every stage of our progress, disaster awaits us. We are likely to be caught while fast by the throne of God, with that fell fiend, moral insanity, and to choose hatred rather than love—discord rather than peace. Never—no, never!—can we be sure that wright will be more attractive than wrong—progression more sure than retrogression. We may begin angels—we may end fiends. To-day we may be entranced with the wisdom and love of God—to-morrow be plotting in hell to dethrone him.

There can be no genuine, healthy, free thought, so long as these fables are counted as unerring truth. There can be no just, no ennobling conceptions of the Divine Creator and Governor of the Univers in the minds of men and women who believe that he has made talking serpents, cunning beasts, to deceive immortal man, and subject him to a terrible death for eating an apple, and that he has contrived to rescue him by throwing his innocent son into the hands of men, that they may murder him and live.

Ho! ye intelligences of the Universe! Hear and wonder with astonishment! The children of men are lost by Adam's eating an apple!—They are restored by the Jews' murdering a God! Justice exemplified and made honorable is triumphant! The innocent are punished, and the guilty are allowed to go free!

How shall we dispel these horrible absurdities? They have no authority except they are bound up in a book called the Bible—much of it written, nobody knows when or by whom. We are gravely told that it has been believed by the wise and good of past ages, as if that alone were positive proof of its truth.

We are, none of us, half well enough acquainted with the history of the past. Superstition has had the custody of its records. Nearly all that has come down to us has come through the hands of a professional priesthood, who have ever supposed that free examination was hurtful to true religion.

The apostles of popular religions are in all this literature eulogized as being wiser and better than the men and women of this age. The best informed of us scarcely realize the deep ignorance of the past. To be sure, the Bible shows that Noah got drunk; Abraham and Isaac lied; Lot committed incest; Jacob was a cheat, and, in the solemn presence of his dying father, impudently affirmed a falsehood, put into his mouth by his artful mother; David was a liar, adulterer and murderer, and left the world with revenge on his heart, swearing his son to execute it; one out of twelve, who had been with Christ in his ministry, betrayed him to his enemies for money, and another repeatedly denied his connection with Christ and confirmed it with an oath, and finally had to receive a vision from Heaven before he could learn that God was no respecter of persons; another, almost deified as God, commenced his career by dragging the disciples of Christ to public punishment, because their teachings were by him deemed irreligious.

All the facts and all the doctrines sustaining popular faith have come through such sources. These things we know. We know, too, that our immaculate fathers, who were most pious, were either murderous persecutors when in power, or victims when out.

Is it not strange that, knowing all this, we can believe that they are the sole vehicles for the transmission of the only truth that can guide men in this life and save them from damnation in the next? Is it not equally strange that the same minds that admire the dying love and magnanimity which prompted Jesus Christ to pray for his enemies, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," can at the same time believe that David's spirit of revenge in the hour of death was after God's own heart? When Christ is compared to David, who will say there is not progress?—progress from hate to love—from revenge to forgiveness; but perhaps it will be said, the forgiveness of Christ is the forgiveness of a god. Be it so; progress is made in the pathway of truth, when we learn that He who does all things after the counsel of his own will desires to forgive the greatest criminals.

Progress has been made in every important science during the last two hundred years. In fact, the scientific era of our race scarce dates back as far as that.

Less than 400 years have elapsed since was first invented the art of printing.

In 1287, a clock was first set up at Westminster, now part of London.

In 1299, a monk in Germany invented spectacles. The same year was earthen-ware invented.

In 1302, the mariners compass was invented.

In 1307, stone coal first began to be used in England.

In 1320, gold was first coined in Europe.

In 1330, gunpowder was first invented by a monk of Cologne.

In 1351, wire was invented.

In 1369, John Wickliffe, a professor in the University of Oxford, began to dissent from Popery. He is called the Morning Star of the reformation. Yea, my friends, its full day is not yet half dawned. Blessed are they who are up to watch and welcome its increasing light.

Wickliffe first translated the Scripture from Latin into English.

In 1415, John Huss and Jerome of Prague, both eminent men, and disciples of Wickliffe, were burned for heresy. The same year Zisca, a reformer, died of the plague, and left directions that a drum should be made of his dried skin, for the purpose of animating the reformers and appalling their enemies. Oh, Zisca! I revere thy example. How must thy freed spirit exult with the reflection that thy physical body when living, and its vestage when dead, were nobly employed in the emancipation of mind!

In 1423, engraving on metal was invented.

In 1457, glass was first manufactured in England.

In 1473, the Greek language was first introduced into France.

In 1477, watches were first made at Nuremberg.

In 1482, the Portuguese first discovered the coast of Guinea. About the same time, post-coaches first came into use in England.

In 1498, the Wallachians, a band of enlightened religious reformers, took 100,000 Poles prisoners, and sold them as slaves to the Turks.—These Wallachians, it will be remembered, were the most enlightened and pious Christians of their time.

In 1517, Martin Luther, a Roman Catholic monk, began his reformation in Germany. The Pope burned his books, and he, by way of retaliation, burned the Popes. Heaven grant that I may live to be able to write something that the superstition of the nineteenth century would be glad to burn!

In 1519, proportional compasses were invented.

In 1529, the Roman Catholic Diet of Spires passed a decree of unfavorable to the Lutherans. John Elector, of Brandenburg, protested against it, and thenceforward dissenters from the Roman Church were called Protestants.

In 1531, post-offices were first established in England.

In 1558, Henry the Eighth, the defender of the faith, the father of Protestantism—I mean the Kingly father—fell in love with Jane Seymour, and caused Anne Boleyn, his former wife, to be beheaded.

In 1539, the Bible—the saving and indispensable Word of God—was first printed in English. Oh, what countless thousands of souls popular mythology has sent to hell for want of this Word, before the human family had learned the art of printing.

In 1540, Sebastian Cabot discovered the variation of the compass.

In 1543, iron was first cast in England. The same year pins were first introduced from France into England.

In 1545, needles were first made in England.

In 1552, books on astronomy and geometry were destroyed in England as magical.

In 1553, John Calvin caused Servetus to be executed for heresy.

In 1572, was the famous massacre of St. Bartholomew, in which 60,000 Protestants were massacred by the Catholics, in obedience to

His Most Christian Majesty Charles the Ninth, in a single night.

In 1584, Lord Raleigh discovered Virginia, a portion of this Continent, throughout which the primeval solitude of the forest was yet unbroken by the hand of civilization, and generation after generation of God's image had been born, lived and died, and gone to an unending hell for want of the Bible!!

In 1588, the first newspaper known in the world was printed in England.

In 1590, telescopes were first invented by Janson, a spectacle maker in Germany.

In 1594, Baron Napier invented logarithms.

Is the truth of science the voice of consolation on this great question? I assume that the creation of planetary systems was not the work of a day, but the progressive work of inconceivable ages. I have not time to discuss this subject in a single lecture. The nebulous theory of Laplace is constantly gaining credit in the scientific world. It supposes matter to have originally formed one mass, and that the same physical laws control the whole. This mass is comprised of simple substances called "elements," of which about fifty-four or five are ascertained by us; that this nebulous matter is made to collect around nuclei by the laws of attraction, and these are made to rotate, thus bringing into action two antagonistic and equally balanced forces, the law of gravitation called the Centripetal force, and the law of momentum, called Centrifugal force. It is now past all doubt that the elementary substances existing upon and in our planet, have heretofore been one mass of iliquid lava, rotating from west to east in its orbit, flattening at the poles and distending its eastern and western diameter. Its surface cooled, and thus were produced that class of rocks without fossil remains known as igneous or primary rocks.

It is also certain that vast and inconceivable periods of time elapsed before these became disintegrated, and a suitable atmosphere developed for the production of organic life. It is equally clear that the first forms of organic life were simple and imperfect compared with those which are now found on the earth.

The progress of this successive unfolding is well described by the Rev. Thos. Dick, an orthodox divine, and philosopher who had learned what hundreds of thousands in Christendom have yet to learn, that the soil which produces our corn was not made at first as soil, but is only a disintegrated rock. He says: "The production of a bed for vegetation is effected by the decomposition of rocks. This decomposition is effected by the expansion of water in the pores or fissures of rocks, by heat or congelation, by the solvent power of moisture, and by electricity which is known to be a powerful agent of decomposition.

The progressive order of the creation is legibly recorded in characters that cannot lie, and can never be counterfeited, in the remains of organized bodies found in the outer crust of our planet. In these we find traces of innumerable orders of beings, existing under different circumstances, succeeding one another at distant epochs, and varying through multiplied changes of form.

If we examine the secondary rocks, which are sedimentary deposits of the primary rocks disintegrated, the first organic remains which present themselves, says Mr. Dick, are those of aquatic plants and large reeds, but of species different from ours. To these succeed madreporae ecrenities, and other aquatic zoophytes, living beings of the simplest forms, which remain attached to one spot, and partake in some degree of the nature of vegetables. Posterior to these, are ammonites and other mollusci still very simple in their forms and entirely different from any animals now known. After these some fishes appear, and plants, consisting of ferns and bamboos increase, but still different from those which now exist.

In the next period, along with an increasing number of extinct species of shells and fishes, we meet with amphibious and viviparous quadrupeds, such as crocodiles and tortoises, and some reptiles and serpents which shew that dry land now existed. As we approach the newest of the solid rock formations, we find lamantins, phocae, and other cetace-

ous and mammiferous sea animals, with some birds. And in the newest of these formations, we find the remains of herbiferous animals of extinct species, the palæotherium, anapalæotherium and of birds, with some fresh water shells. In the lowest beds of loose soils and in peat-bogs are found remains of the elephant, rhinoceros, hippopotamus, elk, &c., of different species from those which now exist, but belonging to the same genera. And lastly, the bones of the species which are apparently the same as those now existing alive, are never found except in the very latest alluvial deposits.

More than thirty thousand different species of animals have been found imbedded in the secondary strata, no living examples of which are now to be found in any quarter of the globe.

Let it be remembered that this is orthodox testimony to a well-known scientific fact. Thus you see—1st, imperfect forms of vegetable life; 2d, lower forms of animal life; 3d, higher developements of vegetable life; 4th, higher forms of animal life; 5th, the entire destruction of some species of animals adapted to the temperature and atmosphere of the earth at one period. In its unfolding changes, they cease to be so, hence become extinct, and their place is supplied by a higher form of animal structure.

At length MAN, the apex of animal organism upon this planet, is produced—the last work of past development. His remains are nowhere found but in late alluvial deposits, showing that his creation is of comparatively recent date. Again: Agassiz, the swiss naturalist and zoologist, says, “We distinguish four ages of nature corresponding to the great geological divisions, namely:

“1st, The Primary or Paleozoic age—comprising the lower Silurian, the upper Silurian, and the Devonian. During this age there were no breathing animals. The fishes were the masters of the creation. We may therefore call it the reign of fishes.

“2nd. The Secondary age—comprising the carboniferous formation. This is the epoch in which air-breathing animals first appear. The reptiles predominate over the other classes, and we may therefore call it the reign of reptiles.

“3d. The Tertiary age—comprising the tertiary formations. During this period, terrestrial mammals of great size abound. This is the reign of Mammals.

“4th. The Modern age—characterized by the appearance of the most perfect of all created beings. This is the reign of man.”

Agassiz further adds, “The inferiority of the earliest inhabitants of our earth appears most striking among the Vertebrals. There are as yet neither reptiles, birds nor mammals.” The fishes, as we have said, are sole representatives of this division of animals, and these, he assures us, were low specimens of the fish tribe. In winding up his treatise upon the development of animal life upon our planet, he says, “From the foregoing sketch, it is evident that there is a manifest progress in the succession of beings on the surface of the earth. This progress consists in an increasing similarity to the living Faun, and among the vertebrals, especially in their increasing resemblance to man.”

This great naturalist closes his work upon zoology by saying, “It is necessary, therefore, in order to comprehend creation, that we combine the study of extinct species with that of those now living, since one is the natural complement of the other.” Superstition would tell us, if we would “comprehend creation,” we must pore over the first chapter of Genesis. Science sets us to work in the rocks which encrust our globe in search of the fossil remains of extinct species of animal life.

Let us pause here and condense what we have sought to learn up to this point:

1st. God informs us by the vestiges of the past, regarding the order of his creation; and that he has not condescended, and will not condescend to inform man in any other way.

2nd. That those who know most of the sciences are best prepared to judge and to teach others when, how, and by whom this world was made.

3d. If the present race of men are better astronomers, geologists,

chemists, botanists and zoologists than Moses or other of the ancients, they are better prepared than they to answer this question.

4th. That it is useless—yea, stupid, to appeal to the ancients to get light upon such subjects, and far wiser to appeal to the testimonies of the living sciences.

5th. That these show, beyond question, that there has been regular progress upon this planet from the period “when it was without form and void,” through millions of years gone by down to the present reign of man.

6th. We also learn that long before man existed the animals preyed upon and destroyed each other.

In this examination, three sciences are chiefly called to our aid: Astronomy, Geology and Zoology. Without their assistance, total darkness would rest upon this question. Before astronomy had been well studied by the aid of the telescope, our ancestors looked out upon the Universe and judged of the motion of the heavenly bodies by appearances. The earth to them seemed large, the sun small, the stars insignificant. Hence, it was concluded that they were all made the fourth day of creation and for the use of the earth, and that they all revolved around the earth. Science corrected this error.

Theology opposed herself to science. She fought the battle with bloody and obstinate perseverance. She imprisoned, tortured, buffeted and silenced some of the early discoverers and proclaimers of truth.—Copernicus and Galileo both suffered for having been inquisitive enough to learn, and brave enough to say, that the earth revolved around the sun. The latter was, however, forced to deny what he knew to be true. But the earth rolled on in her orbit as usual. Other examiners came; and now the truth is out. The earth revolves around the sun.

Well do I remember when geology was opposed by the church, as the ingenious pretence of a malignant infidelity. When it was first suggested that the strata of the rocks clearly demonstrated that the earth was more than six thousand years old, it was responded that the statement was false. Now there is no man having any claims whatever to science, who questions the great antiquity of the earth.

It is also conceded that geology furnishes no evidence whatever of a general deluge like that understood by Noah's flood. Hitchcock, professor of Theology at Andover, has devoted several pages in his work entitled “Religion of Geology,” to show that no general deluge could, or, in other words, would have been likely to have occurred, and that the language of the Bible, in which it says “The waters were upon the face of the whole earth,” does not mean the whole earth, but only that part of it where Noah and his contemporaries resided.

Theology opposed the Copernican system in astronomy, but has now yielded to its claims. She opposed geology also. The preaching of the earth's crust is more convincing than she. Zoology has sounded her trumpet voice, and it is now certain that the living animals on this globe were not made in a day.

Thus have the mythological creeds of Christendom been routed from each of their strongholds successively, and now, instead of denying the truths of astronomy, geology and zoology, her effort is all expended in reconciling them with the revelation which they were said to contradict.

Popular theology has thus been virtually forced to surrender all of its strong bulwarks but one. She still clings with desperate tenacity to the legend of Adam's and Eve's disobedience and the consequent retrogression of the human family. This is her last rallying point. When the human mind shall become emancipated from the thralldom of superstition, so as to trace with care and candor the history of human family, it will know that the doctrine of Adam's fall is a legend of eastern ignorance, originating in an age of mythology.

The Gnosticks, one of the earliest of the Christian sects, were too much illuminated to believe the story of the talking serpent; of a God promenading a terrestrial garden; of a vegetable production called “the tree of life,” guarded by an angel, who continually brandished fla-

ming swords around its top, lest man should eat, and thereby become so tenacious of life that God himself could not destroy him. Equally obnoxious to them was the cruelty and selfishness of the law of Moses. They had not the acumen to see any connection between his system and the benign and merciful doctrines of Jesus Christ. I should like much to know who can.

But let us return to the question, Has man retrograded? In other words, Was he created perfect at first, and is he now totally depraved? Was the human family wiser in their first generation than now?

It is highly probable that the first generation of men were physically larger and stronger than the present, because grossness is not incompatible with strength. A physical giant and an intellectual pigmy are quite likely to be united in the same person. Luxury, refinement, civilization and physical effeminacy are apt to exist as coeval properties of the human family. Thus they who establish the fact that the earlier races were larger and stronger than the present have done nothing to prove them wiser or better.

The legend of man's fall occupies so important a place in the popular theology as to justify each one of us in devoting our leisure for an entire year to be a careful examination of the question, provided our doubts upon it are not sooner removed.

All the great leading doctrines of Christendom rest upon the simple question, the truth, of man's fall, or "original sin," as it is often called. On this hangs the mighty question, Is he to be saved?—has he ever been lost?

The terms saved and lost have only a qualified import if the doctrine of Adam's fall, as understood, is found to be a fable. We shall have to manufacture other and more expressive terms to denote man's relation to his Creator of Adam's fall is fanciful. Before approaching this mighty question, I feel it is necessary first to qualify ourselves for its discussion by dismissing our prejudices—divesting, completely divesting ourselves of all the early inculcations of childhood, and making the examination *de novo*, as the lawyers say.

Oh! that we could now meet the Christian world and examine each of its several dogmas, as if they were now questions, presented for the first time to human consideration. Let us try to suppose that we are now thus trying the question whether man has fallen, as held by popular theology.

The following affirmative propositions are boldly put forth for investigation:

- 1st. On the sixth day of creation God made one man called him Adam.
- 2nd. Out of the rib of that man he made one woman called Eve.
- 3d. That these two generated all the human family that ever lived upon this planet.
- 4th. That God gave them a command not to eat a certain kind of fruit, under penalty of death.
- 5th. A beast, called a serpent, persuaded them to eat and denied danger of punishment.
- 6th. They did eat, and thus became subject to death.
- 7th. In consequence, the earth was cursed and the elements of nature deranged.
- 8th. All of Adam's posterity were likewise cursed, and doomed to three kinds of death: death of the body; a loss of moral sensibility, called moral death; death of the soul, called eternal death, which is only another word to express intense, unending punishment.
- 9th. That this made it necessary that the son of God should also die, at the hands of men, in order that he may be restored by what is called an infinite sacrifice.

On the question whether there was one or more men made at first, or whether man is a progressive development of the lower tribes of animal life, I cannot here pause to argue. Let those whose theology depends upon this legend produce the evidence upon which it rests.

Of proposition No. 2, that Eve was made of Adam's rib, I only desire to say that it is humiliating in this nineteenth century to realize

that the human mind is so benighted as to suppose that men or women are to be made wiser or better by a belief in that absurd legend. I can only say that the wisdom of God's works are such that he who studies them knows that God would not be likely to have made his first perfect work with a rib too much or leave him with a rib too little; and that if Adam was thus made, there has been progression, instead of retrogression, in his physical structure as well as in his wisdom and goodness.

The 4th proposition, that God made a beautiful and tempting fruit, placed it in the midst of the garden in a conspicuous place and denied its use, as a test of Adam's obedience, is so unlike infinite wisdom and goodness; so at variance with human experience; the authority upon which it rests so perfectly fabulous, that it seems strange a single enlightened mind should profess to believe it. The creator of millions of worlds promenading the abode of these talking snakes and naked men, while, strange to say, man, the last, best work of God, knew less than the snake; for Adam and Eve as yet had no knowledge of good and evil.

My only excuse for referring to these absurdities—too puerile for grave argument—is a strong desire to have these records scrutinously examined, fairly weighed in the balance, and thenceforward let them pass for what they are worth.

In 1602, Decimal Arithmetic invented.

In 1603, the nobility of England began to erect houses of brick and stone.

In 1610, thermometers were invented. The same year Galileo observed three of Jupiter's Satellites. He was tried by the Church for his astronomical announcements, and this new revelation of Jehovah was by the tyrannic demon of superstition shut out from the knowledge of mankind, and is not yet half known even in our own country.

In 1619, the circulation of the blood was first discovered by Harvey. The same year Capt. Dermer sailed through Long Island Sound; the first English vessel whose keel had ever marked those waters.

In 1620, the Puritan Fathers, who found this Republic—the freest of the free, the protesters of the Protestant faith—landed upon the rock of Plymouth. They have left as much for us to do as they accomplished. Spiritual strength and future joy and glory, fresh delight and eternal triumph, await those who apply themselves to the work.

In 1633, Galileo was condemned by the Inquisition, having pursued his astronomical researches by the aid of the telescope of his own construction, some 22 years.

In 1641, two hundred and twelve years ago, the first printing press was established in America.

In 1684, Casimir discovered the first and second Satellites of Saturn.

In 1686, the Newtonian philosophy was first published.

In 1725, the first newspaper was printed in New York, by William Bradford.

In 1742, the first literary journal was published in the United States, by Benjamin Franklin.

In 1752, Benjamin Franklin discovered the identity between electricity and lightening.

In 1776, was the first governmental recognition of the equality of man.

This subject to me is of vast interest and importance, but it needs a volume. I am just upon its threshold, and you are wearied with my prolixity. I must come to a close—perhaps to resume it in another lecture.

What is the lesson inculcated by these gleanings? Are we not thereby taught that He in whom we live, and move, and have our being, is infinite in wisdom, goodness and power; that he saw the end from the beginning; that in no part of his works is he disappointed; that in the chaotic elements of nebulous matter, he has provided an infinitude of materials, out of which to produce, through countless years and successive steps of progression, angels and arch-angels?

With what confidence may we go on our way rejoicing, assured at every step that whatever of convulsion or of change may hereafter occur, in the works of God, it will be a change for the better! Yea, should we see "the Heavens wrap together as a scroll and the elements melting as with fervent heat," let us rejoice and be glad, for, from the progression of the past, we may know that these are but the parturition throes of nature, giving birth to higher types and more resplendent forms of life.

With these views, how should our hearts warm with gratitude—yea, leap with joy, that we are created to be partakers of God's exhaustless and ever-increasing bounties; "spectators of his Divine government and works,"—yea, if true to the trust committed to us, honored instruments in promoting and diffusing the happiness of intelligences, which is the grand ultimate of all the gorgeous, elaborate, physical machinery that surrounds us.

And, though our views are now mistaken, misappreciated, misrepresented and feared, I feel the assurance of inspiration that the time is not far distant when we shall know, and rejoice in knowing, that the morning light which now gladdens our vision was but the prelude to a glorious day—a day, compared with which the sickly light of modern Christendom shall appear as midnight darkness.

SAD CHILDREN.

There is one thing which strikes me as very affecting in the condition of any child. It is when that condition is necessarily a melancholy one—when the circumstances which hem it around cast over the surface of that young life an abiding gloom. A melancholy child! What an anomaly among the harmonies of the universe: something as incongruous as a bird drooping in a cage, or a flower in a sepulchre. The musical laughter muffled and broken; the spontaneous smile transformed to a sad suspicion: and the austerities of mature life, the fearful speculation, and forecast of evil, fixed and frozen on a boy's face! And then the sorrow of a child is so absorbing—for he lives only in the present. In the afflictions which fall upon him, man has the aid of reason and faith—he looks beyond the present issue, he detects the significance of his calamity, and, strengthened thus, a brave heart can banish any sorrow. But, as Ritchie beautifully says—"the little cradle, or bed-canopy of the child, is easier darkened than the starry heaven of man." Surely, then, it is a blessed thing to contribute ought that will lighten this gloom, and place the child in a natural condition.—*Humanity in the City.*

I beg to return my sincere and heart-felt thanks to all the citizens of Buffalo, for their extreme kindness to their humble servant,

P. B. RANDOLPH.

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A Port Monnie containing about \$31.00 was lost on the 22d inst. somewhere between the foot of Main street and South Division street. A liberal sum will be paid to the finder by leaving it at the office of the *Age of Progress* 200 Main street.

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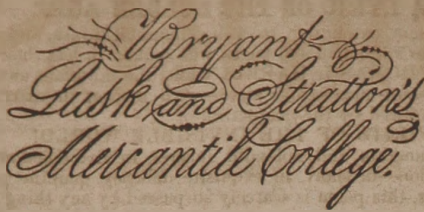
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